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SONGS *C384*
OF *412*
YOUTH

BORZOI POETRY

1922

VERSE, *by Adelaide Crapsey*

ITALIAN POEMS, *an Anthology*

COBBLESTONES, *by David Sentner*

THE SHEPHERD, *by Edmund Blunden*

THE NEW WORLD, *by Witter Bynner*

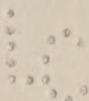
THE MASTER-MISTRESS, *by Rose O'Neill*

SONGS OF YOUTH, *by Mary Dixon Thayer*

COLLECTED POEMS *of James Elroy Flecker*

SONGS OF YOUTH

MARY DIXON THAYER ✓



NEW YORK
ALFRED · A · KNOPF

1922

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DEDICATION

Mother, who gave all I sing,
Take this book—my offering.

Think of it as a bouquet
Of wild flowers picked today;

May the fragrance of their bloom
Fill, awhile, your quiet room.

They will fade. I do not know
Where the Everlastings grow.

The author is indebted to the editor of *The Saturday Evening Post* for permission to reprint certain of the poems in this book.

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SONGS
OF
YOUTH

YOUTH

Ho! I am Youth!

Harken! ye who are weak and old
To me! Come! Touch my cheek
For it is wondrous smooth! And
sleek

My hair is, it is full of gold
That runs like fire in its strands.
And feel my hands'
They are so white and strong. . . .
They shall right every wrong!

Ho! I am Youth!

The summer wanders in my heart.
Souls are flowers
Sown underneath the stars; and blown
Through gorgeous hours.
I drink wine of the moon. Apart
I tear the purple veil
Of Paradise and dart
Within. Death is a silly tale
Old men and women think is true
(And so it grew)
For me it shall not be
More than a whispered word at dusk—
More than a rotten, cast off husk

Of thought. I cannot die
For I am Youth.... Ho! Youth am I!

Yes! Crowd about and envy me,
All ye
With hesitating ways,
And shallow, furtive, teary eyes
That are so dull—in which surprise
Has vanished—ye who cannot see
But into faded other days
And seem to be
Half alive. . . . Oh!
Do you never crave to know
The joy that a sky-lark flings
Into the Dawn? The secret things
And glad,
That go
Through the instants,
And the mad
Pulses that beat
Blood to fire?
Flesh into heat?

Higher....Higher....
I leap than any steer
Bounding in wild despair
Through the wild forest air
From hunters. But I fear
Not hunters, I!
For I am Youth. I shall not die.

Ho! I am Youth!
For me the trees

Are red with fruit. For me the breeze
Is dipped in fragrance; tinted; and
For me pale oceans swing, the sand
Is white as crumpled sheets,
The cool world meets
The sun,
And ages run
Into a nonsense rhyme.
All time
Is made for me! For me!
I laugh at Destiny!

Ho! I am Youth!
Death is a lie.
Beauty is truth—
And so am I!
Ho! So am I!

A THOUGHT

Oh! There is so much to say!
Shall I ever get it said?
Life is always just "today"—
Can I never run ahead
Up to God, and turn, and see
What today will do to me?

MY LOVES

I love. But my dearest loves are not
Aware of me. . . .

I love a tree
Swaying against a sunset pale as faded roses,
With branches quivering
Like pointed fingers,
Sunburnt and strong,
To where a long
Cloud lingers,
And daylight closes.

I love a star that opens wholly
At dusk, like a young lily lifting
In some still, shadowed pool
Tinged with the cool
Green sense of Dawn, and drifting
Upon white silences. . . .

I love the hour
When love commences,
And the strange power
Of little things—
I love blue shadows laid—
Like curling plumes—on snow;
And icicles, clear shafts of jade;
And dreams that a thrush flings
Against cold stars. . . .

I love wild streams that flow
Eternally in quiet places,
Tumbling, like silk spilt out and laces,
Torn and shimmering. And I love low,
Trembling branches, eager and young,
That touch my cheek,
And only speak
In whispers. I love songs sung
And half forgotten—melodies that break
Unending through us, and that make
The tunes our hearts beat time to. . . .

I love each day
More than the last. . . .
What *is*, I love, and what is past—
What will be—even Death,
The swirling, unrestrained breath
Of God, that sweeps a world and me
To a hidden Destiny.

CREATION

Listen, God! I understand
Your laughter as you made the land
And oceans, as you stood and hurled
World upon world—world upon world!

You felt as I feel when I make
One little song that does not break.
You felt as I feel when I've said
New words that I find in my head.

Listen, God! "Let there be light!"
You cried—I too know the delight
You knew as suns flashed and obeyed,
And all the universe was made!

You felt as I feel when I seize
One chord out of dim harmonies.
You felt as I feel when I blow
One note—only more so . . . more so!

Listen, God! I comprehend
Your agony when you descend
Upon the earth, and see each thing
That you have caused there, perishing.

NAMES

What does a Lover care for names?
Are the gold threaded weeds that bend
Keen, blue-tipped points upward, and send
Timorous shadows o'er meadows
(Like slim, grey-lipped, wind floated flames)
Less fair because I have not cared
To seek through pages that are penned
For syllables that fools have dared
To blend?

Do Lovers need a word?
Or is the star that drops to blow
Between the poplars, and the low
Cry of a cloud-entangled bird
Less dear to me because I heard
Not what men have called bird or star—
And not what men think Wonders are?

Oh! Come with me into the world!
I wander where the sun is curled
Moist and unheeded round the breast
Of flowers, and I do not rest
Till I have kissed the Dawn, and felt
Her arms about me, and have knelt
Dumb, in stillness, praying a prayer
That is forever, everywhere.

Oh! Come with me! Forget your books
Scratched with black lines and broken hooks!
Forget your wisdom! Only seek
To understand young leaves that speak,
And grope and toss, and stretch and lean
Toward you, and are cold and clean!

Come—come with me! The tall trees sway
Against the dreams of Yesterday.
The world rocks with them. We shall lie
And touch the sunset, stealing by,
And we shall feel pale thunders creep
Through the hot earth, and we shall weep—
Gladness of life—sadness of death—
Creation's pulse—breath of its breath.

Will you heed then the *names* of things?
Life is ecstasy! Spread your wings!
Drink the moonlight! Laugh with the sea!
Love with the flowers! Follow me!

MORNING

I lay in bed. I heard the sun
Cry out "Today—Today's begun!"

I lay in bed. I kept my eyes
Tight closed. I knew that all the skies

Were washed in pale pink soapsuds there,
But I thought that I did not care.

I lay in bed. A little breeze
Came hurrying among the trees,

And, jumping o'er the window-sill,
Crept close beside me, and was still.

And then a bird began to sing
"Wake up! Wake up! you lazy thing!"

I tumbled out of my warm bed—
Oh! the sky was as red—as red!

And the world trembled, every bit!
I laughed. And kissed my hand to it.

DAISY FIELDS

There is a wondrous field I know
In which a million daisies grow
Like giant flakes of shiny snow.

And all the night and all the day
The daisies jerk their heads, and sway
From side to side. I think that they

Would love to break their stems and be
White stars among the clouds, and free,
Instead of in the world with me.

I think the daisies always try
To float away—and that is why
They toss about and sigh—and sigh.

TO A HERMIT THRUSH

Though I lost all the songs I made,
Though I forgot all prayers I prayed,
Dost think that this were aught to me
If I could sing one song, as thee?

Through the low sigh that never ends
Of forests, thy sweet voice ascends—
Carol of loveliness more brief
Than shattered wave, or falling leaf.

Hark! Thou canst never sing for long
Alone! The earth is pierced with song,
And every leaf and every tree
Trembles in hushed expectancy.

Poet of twilight and of dawn,
God of the misty places,
Lover of the green silences,
Mocker of human faces!

Lo! I bow down my heart to thee!
I break my little lays!
Thou art a minstrel whom no words
Of mine can rightly praise.

Sing! Sing, Enchantress! Ages pass.
The sunlight moves. The sky
Is dark with shadows, white with stars,
And men are born and die.

Still on the wings of restless winds,
Over cloud thickened lakes,
Thy dream is hung, thy madness flung,
Soars upward—lingers—breaks.
Dost think I would not sleep, while yet
Waking is ecstasy?
Or die—while thou art singing and
Pass unreluctantly?

GRATITUDE

I would give back to the world
All it has given to me.
The blood of every dying leaf;
Joy of summers, and the grief
Of endings; gestures of a tree,
And every pulse of life that stirred
More life in me; notes of a bird,
And fresh dew gathered into balls
Of crystal, tipped
On swaying grasses; waterfalls;
And waves that slipped
Across soft sands; and whisperings
In forests of forgotten things;
The touch of flowers, and the ways
Of fir-trees, and enchanted days;
And the sweetest of all learning—
Youth, and youth's impassioned yearning.

I would give to the world
The sense of stars and sea;
Dawn; God; and ecstasy;
And then would draw myself apart,
And break and toss the world my heart,
And with an echo for a name
Return to Silence, whence I came.

A QUESTION

How can I squeeze my soul into
The words you think are best?
How can I pound it stale and flat
And leave it for the world to pat
And taste—and test?

So you would have me do, I know,
For when I've caught the beat
Of a young heart and pinned it tight
Upon a page with all my might—
A wondrous feat!

When I have dipped the swaying wind
Out of the dusk, or kept
The dream of rose-buds on my pen
That scribbled words you asked for—then—
Although I wept,

You wiped the coolness from the wind,
And broke the rose that lay
Curled in sweetness under the ink
Dreaming of hours blue and pink—
And went away. . . .

SKETCH

Smoke tainted mist brushes the city,
Buildings lose color and their edges,
Dulled, sink deep into the oval sky.
Beyond, the river past its hedges,
Woods and fields, slips by.

Low in the west a crimson scar
Pulses, where a great Hand
Stabbed swift the fluttering heart of day
Till her warm blood gushed out. The sand
Is red. Poplars sway

With the cold breath of fainting light,
And grasses by the water's rim
Shudder. Each tiny blade,
A compass true, points up to Him
Who knows. I am afraid.

The city's lost in cloud.
Its reassuring din is stilled.
I am alone—a dreamer standing on a dream—
All is unreal, the void filled
With tiny sounds. The smothered scream
Of engines thundering, somewhere

Afar, pierces and terrifies.
Swallows, dipping in the mist,
Fly on. The pale world sighs.
Grey shadows crack and sift.

BATHING

Ho! Winds! Sweep through me now! I stand
Upon a puckered seam of land,
Basted with green silk ripples thread,
Pinned with a silver pin of light.
I fling my arms above my head!
Am I not fair? Am I not white?

Ho! Winds! Ho! Trees! Ho! Clouds that cling
To the old world! Ho! Anything!
Watch me! Watch me! Now I shall run
Upon those lazy waves, I'll stare
Into those purple eyes! What fun
To pinch their bodies, pull their hair,

And laugh! I'll tease them! They will chase
Me tumblingly, and kiss my face,
And when I'm tired, their arms about
My neck shall draw me close, and we
Shall pick the stars as they come out
At dusk, and blossom in the sea!

THE SONG-MAKER

The little songs I sing are true
Because I sing them about you.

The wisest critics nod, and call
Me "Poet"—I were not at all

A poet had you never come
Into my life—I had been dumb,

And walked with harnessed soul, and bowed,
Nor dared to weep or laugh aloud.

As some would measure happiness
I had been happy—loving less;

As some would reckon woman's bliss
I had been stronger—wanting this.

Shadows of broken clouds that hush
A world, and naked dawns that blush

At their own flagrant loveliness!
Oh stars and sea! oh consciousness

Of ages! What are words of men
Before your silent thunder? When

The last day topples from the brim
Of years, and we look up at Him

Who caused us, and caused love, yet kept
Our lives apart—we who have wept

With the forbidden wantonness
Of youth—may He then stoop and bless

Us, whispering—"Now Time is dead—
Eternity lies all ahead. . . .

RECKONING

These I have lost: The ecstasy
Only to live; the touch of dawn;
And the mad, aching, free
Thoughts of my youth—the drawn
White veils of life—and little things
That mark the rhythm as God sings.

And I have lost the sense of awe;
Before deserted shrines
I pass unseeing. Never more
Kneel down if a star shines,
Or falls, or if sweet fragrance blows,
Or if a friend dies, or a rose.

This I have learned: The way to wait,
And the strange loveliness of you;
A secret that, too late,
I understood; A few
Dear, foolish words; the way to weep;
And the long, lonely way—to sleep.

FATALISM

There are two Eyes I cannot see
Smiling at me . . . smiling at me. . . .
There is a Voice I do not know
Bidding me go . . . bidding me go. . . .

Out through the crooked, narrow ways
Alone . . . alone. . . .
Beyond our crumpled Yesterdays
Where but a child still laughs and plays,
And not a moan
Is known. Where sunset petals curl
In fading amethyst and pearl;
Into a universe unreal,
To a half understood Ideal
Who turns her face aside, and weeps,
Because she keeps
Man's little dreams, toward her flown,
Beneath her heel.

Alone . . . alone. . . .
I go and feel
The sunlight in my heart, and each
Lesson that Sages strive to teach
Open, unfingered, in my soul—

A wondrous scroll
Antiquity
Has left to me;
For in the tremor of a rose
Is love's Passion;
In the fashion
Of a pale, drooping cloud that goes
Between the years, and breaks, and throws
Itself against Immensity,
Cannot you see
A symbol of our life? We too
Creep in the vastness undismayed;
We, too, trace a dim channel through
Our time, and fade
Suddenly, like a broken cloud,
And but a tarnished, torn shroud
Will cover what we hoped and dreamed,
And what we were, and what we seemed. . . .

Oh God! I thank you that you give
Us this great privilege to live!
For I have pressed
Young flowers, here, against my breast,
And trembled with the little breeze
That fills, with secrets, little trees. . . .
And I have lain very still
Among the ferns on some warm hill
That yet dashes
Up, and splashes
The glassy sky with mists of green. . . .
Oh! I have seen
Swift, tiny ripples all of gold

Around the throats of daisies fold,
And clasp and sway,
At end of day.

Then mellow grasses everywhere—
Wisps of the blonde earth's yellow hair—
Have brushed my cheek, and I have smelt
Their fragrance. Oh, and I have felt
The ageless vigor of the world
Rush through me, like a comet hurled
In space, as, held in ecstasy
With earth's brown body close to me,
The forces of her throbbing blood
Mingled with mine in such a flood
Of life—Youth leaped to break its bars
And dance forever with the stars!
We kissed. My face crushed to her face—
All of her strength and ageless grace,
With the first meeting of our lips
Tingled into my finger tips. . . .

Oh! Not a bird that swirls and dips
On high but it has set my heart
A faster tune, and not a dart
Of shadow, or the sound of wings
Or waves—there is no wind but brings
Fresh joys, keener love of being—
Seeking, knowing, feeling, seeing!

God!

Thanks for this supreme, mad glance
Into the things of Circumstance—

This vision of Eternity
That you are giving now to me. . . .

Might it be true (as Prophets say)
Our Night but waits another Day,
And though flesh crumbles into dust,
Our spirits, ever upward thrust,
Live on! If *this* indeed were true?
And I should sometime meet the You
That caused, and causes still, the Me?
But . . .

There are Eyes I cannot see
Looking at me . . . looking at me. . . .
There is a Voice I do not know. . . .
And I must go . . . and I must go. . . .

TO A SCRIBBLER

You—who make yourself a Poet—
Are a fool, and ought to know it.
Unless a song bursts in your heart
Like petals blown wide apart. . . .
Unless you cannot *help* but sing
For God's sake write not anything!

SPRING SONG

Oh wicked, wicked little bird!
Why do you laugh at me?
Is it because I'm young—and bound—
And you are young—and free?

Oh beautiful, swan-throated cloud!
Why do you float away
Into the night, nor turn and glance
Once backward, on Today?

Oh restless, pale blue slippered waves!
How can you dance, nor tire
Forever? Is there nothing that
You have not—and desire?

TO A WILD ROSE

Little wild rose I've found you. See!
Under your cool, wet leaves
You lift a pale, sweet face to me,
And all the summer grieves.

For summer knows that I can stretch
My hand, and snap your soul
Like a pink string, where shadows swing
And silence brims the bowl

Of your frail life—why do you live
Thus hidden, little rose?
Did you, then, fear if I came near,
Your happiness must close

Into my hand that has crushed what
Is most lovely, that takes
A bud—a butterfly—a song—
To play with—though one breaks?

Oh, little rose, bow down your head
And blush—I do not dare
To touch you. I am sad and old
And you are very fair.

Draw back your petals—fold your
thoughts.

Into the dusk she goes

Who loves you better than to take

You with her, little rose!

CREDO

Deeply to live. That is to be
A part of nature—like a tree.
To sway beneath a breath of God,
To feel our roots beneath the sod;
To grow—to strain toward a cloud
Beyond our reach—to prick the shroud
Of twilight with a leaf, to die—
Nor envy him who passes by.

Deeply to love. That is to seek
For words which, found, we cannot speak.
It is belief in things untried,
A grandeur in what is denied,
An ecstasy beyond our sense,
A gesture—without recompense.
It is a dream more sadly sweet
Than hearts that touch, or lips that meet.

REMEMBRANCE

Might I have loved you? I do not know.
But I think if your hand had once touched mine
As we stood on the hill where the pale clouds blow
Close to the world, and Time runs slow
Under the Pine. . . .

If our hands had touched, and eyes had met,
The thing that is dead in my heart had stirred,
And I think that we both might be standing yet
There on the hill I can't forget
Without a word. . . .

The crooked trees would have stooped and seen
Strange wonder in our eyes,
And the greedy white waves that scrape so clean
The flat blue rocks, would have suddenly been
Cold with surprise,

And slim, warm fingered winds would have
brushed
Stars through the dusk for this—
That the lips of Eternity be hushed,
And all of the centuries' love be crushed
Into our kiss.

COMMUNION

What fun to lie down in a daisy field! The stems of the daisies are polished and moist, and they tremble a little—ever so little—as though they were afraid—but I think it is because they are happy. I, too, tremble when I am happy.

I am lying so still, so still; the daisies do not understand. They lean over me to see what is the matter, and their faces are very pale. I look up into their golden eyes and laugh.

Sometimes, between the daisies, a caterpillar comes. I am not frightened—though it is big—as big as an elephant, and its body is covered with hair. Slowly, smoothly, it swings from one stem to another. The daisies shudder as it passes over them, and they droop their lovely heads. No one knows about the caterpillar but the daisies—and I.

Sometimes a cricket sits on my hand and sings. Its voice is hoarse—but we like it—the daisies and I—because it is meant to be beautiful.

Sometimes white butterflies come drifting . . . they are the souls of daisies.

Sometimes cloud shadows touch us like sighs, and sometimes a thrush sings. But always the daisies lean over me, and the world is powder and gold.

THE WAY

I walk a-tip-toe in the woods
For Beauty slumbers there,
Her breathing shakes the youngest leaves
And ripples in my hair.

I walk a-tip-toe across fields,
Or I might break the wings
Of butterflies, and crush the heart
Of buds, and other things.

I pass a-tip-toe through the world
And hardly dare to weep—
Lest God should brush away this dream
Of life—and let me sleep.

THE SCULPTOR

I said in my heart: Before death spoil
And pull me under the damp, black soil—
Under the white, invisible things—

Before my flesh is hurled
Into the vitals of the world,
I shall stand up and toil
For Beauty. I shall find her, make
Her real to you. For Beauty sings
Unto my soul. Oh! I shall break
Mountains to reach her, and, alone,
(For others will but think me mad)
I shall carve out of a blank stone
Her image.

From her frozen sleep,
Hot and alive, Beauty shall leap
Into the eyes of men. . . .
Oh! then. . . .
I can die—not caring—
With my Beauty daring
The clouds. Supreme! High! Unafraid!
Beauty! The Beauty that *I* made!

And so I clenched my hands and toiled
In the dim Night.

Black vultures fanned the burning air
Waiting my death—greedy to tear
My heart in shreds. I heard them, there,
Shrieking in the empty spaces
Between the stars. Empty faces
Grinned out at me
In mockery. . . .

Time—stupid, cruel, staring—sat
Beside me—even thought to pat
My body ere he pierced it through
And mangled it. I've watched him do
The same to others. Murderer!
But I would make him wait—for Her!

She grew! Under my trembling hands
No one understands
How, she grew!

White were her tiny feet
As opened waves, and fleet.
Her limbs washed in the dew
Out of a morning mist—
Her marble flesh I kissed
To make it pink.

Oh! Can you think
How beautiful she was? Her breasts
Were young petals, tender, curving
Beneath a faint transparent moon—
Tantalizing, and unnerving
Every little timid breeze

Draping futile harmonies
On her shoulder.
To behold her
Was to swoon.

Oh, there was rapture in her eyes!
Rosy arms up to the skies
She flung. On her lips, Loveliness,
And the dream of a caress. . . .

Beauty! Beauty! I had won. . . .
Lo! My Task of tasks was done!
Up I leaped triumphantly. . . .
But viper-like, suddenly
Time plunged his fangs into my heart—
I felt the awful poisons dart
Through every vein
In stabs of pain—
I fell . . . and could not rise again. . . .

My heart's blood flooded Beauty's feet
(No doubt she thought it cool and sweet)
My stiffened arms in agony
I stretched to her . . . she did not see. . . .
I died. But in the vastness there
Did Beauty care?

A FAREWELL

Tonight you sleep. You sleep, at last.
Life is a dream. Your dream is past.
Farewell. The crowd that came to weep
Has left—to laugh. Alone, you sleep.
The night is here. The grass is wet.
The stars are white. Shall I forget?

DRAWING IN PENCIL

Pale gray waves, and pale gray sky,
Tips of pines a-quiver,
Pale gray winds like a child's first sigh—
Song from over the river.

Ye who sing, in this dim world,
What would your voices say?
Blood tipped, the notes fall in my heart—
They fall—and the world is gray.

TO A SQUIRREL

Poor, funny, tiny, frantic beast
Who prattles from a tree,
And fixes shiny, impish eyes
Between the leaves, at me!

I watch the pounding of your heart
Against your furry breast,
You tremble lest I should disturb
The fuzz-balls in your nest.

I am your Fate, your God, your Hell,
And still you scamper near,
And boldly chatter out your wrath
In agonies of fear.

I go. May He who looks beyond
The little ways of men,
Hush, as He comes, our terror and
Smile down upon us, then.

AUTUMN

Oh muse, infuse my heart and brain
That I may utter the refrain
I hear and lose, and hear again!

Now Autumn walks in majesty
Between the ages; never old,
She sprinkles thick the world with gold,
And loops, in passing tree to tree,
Veils of a blue transparency.

There is a brooding and a hush
O'er vale and forest. As I pass
There is a trembling in the grass;
And there are tints no artist's brush
May hope to catch. There is a flush

Of triumph on the earth's brown cheeks,
And into nature's solitudes
Comes now a Presence that intrudes—
A Soul that yearns, and never speaks,
And seeking, tells not what it seeks.

Spirit of sadness and of awe!
Silent and lonely wanderer!

I feel your breath, I watch the stir
Of leaves beneath your step. Before
Your unseen image I adore.
Oh, Might I only voice the things
You whisper me! Could I but tell
The beauty of your long farewell,
And weave in songs a poet sings
Your falling tears, and murmurings,

And melodies and silence, your
Enchantment tremulous and fair,
Your golden eyes, and loosened hair,
And wayward gestures! Oh to lure
You into words that might endure!

I cannot. Even as I write
The splendour dies. I grope; I find
A broken flower left behind;
A faded thought; and where was Light
There darkness enters. There is night.

MEDITATION

I touch myself. My skin,
Though warm and sweet,
Soon shall be meat
For worms. It will begin
To sift to air
And, crumbling there,
That stinking dust of me
Will touch Infinity.

Oh! The dark pain to know
That I must go. . . .

Stars, suns and flowers,
And beasts and hours—
They know not this.

I yearn a bliss
I cannot reach—
I learn a song
I cannot teach. . . .
I shudder in the vastness. Blend
In what I cannot comprehend.

TO CAROLINE S. JONES

Willow, lean over her, awake her gently,
And you, little flowers, listen intently!
Hush; and oh listen! Perhaps you can hear
The sound of her breathing, for you are near;
You are so close to my darling—stoop low—
She may be weeping, and I do not know.
She may be laughing, and never a sound
Breaks through! I lie with my face to the ground.
Will you listen, tiny white flowers for me?
Can you wake her, arms of the pale willow-tree?

MY "IF"

If I could only sing
The blueness of one flow'r
Growing unnoticed, there,
Through its blue curtained hour
Of sun and wind and air. . . .
Bending its tiny face to bring
The vigor of grass rippled hills
And polished skies into its stem,
As Pan a hollow reed-stick fills
With rapture, blows it forth again,
Whispered, slow drifting melody
Of cloud encircled plain,
Of shadowed, pulsing sea,
Caught in his pipe, and woven free,
And tossed back, sweet, to them. . . .

If I could only sing
The tremor of one leaf
Floating upon an oval pool,
And the unpitied grief
Of the great Mother Tree, beyond,
Sobbing; who strives to fling
Gaunt arms about the sky and tear
From its closed fist her children, there. . . .

Huge Thing, half human and half fool,
Dumb, aching, over fond,
Who shudders so, and grieves
Although she knows
That Spring will bring
Her other leaves. . . .
And summer goes. . . .

If I could only sing
The blackness of a moon swept beach,
Wet, blurred with little stars,
The laughter of young waves that reach
In knotted, lace edged bars
Across it, and that swing
Out echoes of a diamond song
Dropped from a billow stretched along
The sand, until it broke—
Until its soul awoke
And, waking, cried
The agony
Of timeless sea
Before it died. . . .

Oh, if I could but sing
One of your smiles—just one—
So that the world might look
And learn the wisdom of a Book
Unwritten. Everything
That were a part
(Since worlds begun)
Of brain and heart
Of man who longed to know, or knew

Love's beauty, were a part of you—
And might I sing
Of anything—
That's fair, and sing it true—
My singing were a lover's trial
(Who found all beauty in your smile)
To give it back to you.

SONG OF THE MORNING

Hail, little singers of the grass
Who are—and with a summer—pass!
Hail, little flowers turned to see
The dawn, and wave farewell with me!

We seek forgotten paths that lead
Through old, enchanted ways;
We seek gold mornings, and the breath
Of unreturning days.

Hail, little shadows, gently keen!
Hail, silence, deeply soft and green!
Hail, little poets of the grass!
Awake and sing! And sing . . . and pass. . . .

TO A PERSONAGE

Have you never felt your heart
Open, like a rose,
When the sun bounds out and throws
Itself through Infinity
Like a wind-tossed, weightless ball—
Have you not felt this at all?

Have you never felt your life
Lift itself, and soar
Like a bird that vanishes,
And returns no more?
Like a rising moon that we
Watch imprisoned in a sea?

Have you never felt the dawn
Touch, with white fingers,
A toneless string that lingers
Deep within you—till it breaks—
Leaves but shining strings well strung
For the song that must be sung?

Have you never madly laughed—
Paused—to wonder why?
Have you never wept because
Flowers, too, must die?
If you have not, it is true
That I do not envy you!

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN

If I were dead—and lying here—
I think the birds would come quite near,
The squirrels clamber on my knee,
The ferns droop, sighing, over me.

If I were dead and stretched, as now,
Beneath the trees, the trees would bow
Their heads, and rosy winds would creep
Softly, lest they disturb my sleep.

I am not dead. And while I live
The forest cannot yet forgive
My life. Oh! But I'm glad that I
Shall be forgiven—when I die!

ONE OF US

She passed; in silks and golden fur;
In motor, whose unending purr
Was like an ocean, deep and slow.
She passed. I stood and watched her go.
How pale her face! And all the lace
Of veiling could not hide her eyes
In which I saw—as long before—
A sick surprise. . . .

Her tryst, now, is with death—ah, but
She cannot cease to smirk and strut
And, insincere,
Struggling to quell some Phantom here,
Moves on, a pitied, fearing Thing
Through the gay world that does not bring
Her rest. The crowded, gaudy street,
The cackling fops,
The tinted glitter of the shops,
The noise and the sticky heat—
All terms of life's reality—
Are but a painted mockery,
Strange pictures held in trembling hands—
Pictures nobody understands—
For such as she!

Oh! Drive her on! And let her stare
Dumbly from her glass prison there
Upon the outer, polished shell
Of being, that can hide so well
The horrors of an inner Hell
She feels, but that she cannot see—
Yet dreads, in her mortality.

Soon there shall creep unwept, away,
Into unnumbered Yesterday,
A life that, living, never knew
It lived, nor dying, death was true.

YVONNE

How gay her laughter!
(Yet a fool knows
Storms lie in sunsets,
Thorns in a rose.)

How sweet her face is!
(No one can see
Worms that are gnawing
Roots of a tree.)

How red her lips are!
(Could a man guess
Their wine were poison
For lips to press?)

WISDOM

Watch but a leaf fall down, too soon,
From off the tree that bore it.
See but a flower blanch and swoon
Because a maiden wore it.
Follow an echo till it ends,
Dream but one dream that's broken—
You have learned wisdom that transcends
All that is ever spoken.

A SECRET

There in the forest, under the dew—
(You'd laugh if I told—if ever you knew!)
Under the heaped up needles of Pine
Lies buried—your letter.

It was so slim and so cold—so stiff!
It was quite dead; and I thought, then, that if
Words died—yes, even your words and mine,
Dear, it were much better

To lay them down in some quaint, far place,
We had loved together. Is there disgrace
In loving and ceasing to understand?
In dreaming—forgetting?

Oh, but I wish you had been there, too!
It was so quiet, and I tried to do
This last thing bravely, and yet my hand
Trembled. Was I letting

My own life into the little grave
That I had made? It was hard to be brave!
Oh! Even the shadows bent and cros't
My heart. The birds withdrew.

And there your letter will lie—will lie. . . .
Forever and ever—while you and I
Wander, seeking the dreams we have lost. . . .
Would you laugh—if you knew?

APRIL

Little fires of delight sweep me when the soft petals of a flower blow unexpectedly against my cheek, when a bird breaks its heart in a song, when the purple moss that falls always in the swamps, rocks gently, between pointed shadows.

What a day it is! The long grass of the fields beats in pale, yellow ripples against the sky. The tips of Pine trees are swaying, stiffly. Above, a hawk is floating.

It is as though somebody's heart were throbbing under the earth—setting the fingers of the trees trembling, pulsing through the blades of grass.

I run down the hill. Through my loose hair the wind flows like the breath of a sleeping giant. It is warm in the valley. There, it is the bosom of the world. Spring leans there first, star-eyed and eager. . . .

Out of the branches of Willows rosy-gray balls are bursting. I tear one away. How soft it is! How gentle! I press the furry bud against my cheek.

Clouds are lurching in the sky—splintering, and rolling away. It is very quiet.

CHANT OF THE SEA

Who loves to kiss my lips at night
Knows they are cold, knows they are white.
Who lays his head upon my breast
Shudders. I give eternal rest.
Come! Merge your little lives in me!
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

A million ages are, and go.
I laugh at them. I do not know
The lash of time, the laws of death.
I pant with being, and my breath
Goeth, and bloweth back to me.
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

Unnumbered Dawns have poured their light
Over my pulsing limbs. The bright,
Gold stars dropt down into my arms,
Men swooned beneath my cruel charms.
Think not to know the depths of me!
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

Sometimes I stretch myself out prone
Beneath the sky, and all alone
Whisper unto faint worlds above

The endless secret of my love.
Sometimes I rear myself and fling
My arms around the cliffs, and sing.

Sometimes I laugh. Often my hair
I tie with long white ribbons fair,
And dance until the young clouds break
Their hearts into the chords I make.
Then, if you dare, come dance with me!
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

Oh! I can teach you how to hate
As well as love. Come be my mate!
I'll twine your throat with colored pearls,
I'll pin blue star-fish in your curls,
And your warm body I shall hold
Till it is white. Till it is cold.

Then I shall hurl it suddenly
Against the rocks. Then I shall flee,
And, licking my pale lips with glee,
Muttering incoherently,
Recoil into Eternity!
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

THE UNSEEN

In sunlit silences,
Through midnight hours,
I sought—I seek thee—Loveliness. . . .

In the frail cups of flow'rs
That dusk drenches,
In the long, strange caress
Of waves, and in the secret parts
Of time, and within human hearts.

Vanishing, beautiful, gone—when regainable,
Dreamless I seek for thee, Dream unattainable!

Is there a leaf that drops—
Worlds that must fade?
Is there a life that stops—
Are new worlds made?

Wonder and argument,
Love, mystery,
Sadness and merriment
Lead but to thee.

Does morning sweep the air
With glist'ning wings—

Do children wander where
A skylark sings—

Are great words spoken and
Misunderstood—
Are young thoughts broken and
Lost, because good. . . .

All that is sadly and
Wondrously true,
All that is gladly
Eternal, or new. . . .

Power unchanging and that yet changes all—
Shadowing, shadowless one! Is aught small?
Is aught great? Or seems anything most—or
less—
To thee in an universe—Loveliness?

THOUGHTS

In sooth, I know not if I be
In love with love—or love but thee!
Hadst thou not better come and see?

The moon is very round and white.
Alone, I watch it, every night—
Yet I am young—oh! what a plight!

Each morning sees the sun arise
And burst apart the bolted skies.
It looks at me with its red eyes.

And all day long the shadows fling
Their arms about, and big clouds swing;
And all day long the thrushes sing.

Sometimes I wander near the brink
Of waterfalls. Sometimes I drink.
Sometimes I only stand and think.

Sometimes I watch the twilight creep
Across the hills, and then I sleep.
Sometimes I lie awake, and weep.

And all night long, stoops over me
A thought—perhaps it is of thee.
Dost thou not care to come and see?

TO A WATERLILY

Here on my desk it lies,
Glory of sun and air!
Ivory, gold filigree, and green—
How did it draw from the dullēd sheen
Of quiet pool and thick, staled ooze
A life so brilliant and so fair?

Cool, cooler than star wet skies—
Child of Light and God's dreaming, whose
Soul fills all my own with fragrance—
Poem unuttered and sublime
That but an echo learns . . . and time. . . .

What! Fading? All your petals curl. . . .
Was my touch rough, sweet flower?
Ah! would that I too might furl
My life as yours, and in one hour
Opened, as you—broken—turn whence
I came; giving, as you have given yourself;
 thus close;
Fade as a lily fades . . . go as a lily goes!

BUBBLES

It is hard to believe in Death. Death is so unlikely! Why should I believe in it? But perhaps it is true—yes, there are people who say that it is. And yet—how ridiculous. . . .

I go into the garden. A little fountain is tumbling about. The sun cuts it through and through but the bubbles do not break. The bubbles are blue and yellow. They look as hard as stones. They are like colored pebbles under the sea.

There are butterflies in the garden, too—thousands of them. It is as though the petals of the flowers had been torn away and sent floating through the wind.

The grass is warm. When I stretch myself upon it it seems to me that I am lying upon a silk quilt—a quilt that is as big as the world.

There are birds in the trees and I am glad that I do not know their names. I only want to shut my eyes and to laugh—to laugh softly, forever, all alone. It is wonderful to be alone!

I am trying to believe in Death. The birds are singing deliciously. The flowers are so quiet . . . they are listening. The world is a bubble too—squeezed between crumpled clouds. How can I believe in Death? How can I believe in it . . . till the bubble breaks?

CHILDHOOD

I loved, then, meadows softly sweet,
Powdered with flow'rs, a cloud
Edged thick with gold; the sobbing, fleet
Song of a bird, the loud
Moan of forests curbed low in grief;
A star I loved—a world—a leaf—

A daisy. Twilights and blue days,
Wind, snowflakes, people's eyes,
A sled, a rabbit, and a dream. . . .
Life was a long surprise.
I loved the moon; I loved ice cream,
And laughter, and to touch cool silk,
Or velvet—loved the taste of milk. . . .

I loved to run; I loved to feel
The wind upon my face,
Fingering all my curls and, too,
I loved brown leaves; a place
Where rich earth crumpled with cold dew
Silvering all its perfumed cuts.
I loved the soft, warm, crooked ruts

Of wagon wheels through woody lanes
Where white bloodroots trembled;
Loved streams in abandon rushing

Past prim buds assembled
At the grassy edges—hushing
Vague music in the undertones
Of water splashed on colored stones.

I loved all, and I scarcely knew
What I loved most—myself
Or others—or the magic world
With its unhoarded wealth
Of tints and sounds and feelings whirled
Together; I was but a part
Of that which was and is—a heart

That beat itself in rightful tune
With creation. A spray
Of purple blossoms touching me
Could wound me, or could sway
My soul in flaming ecstasy,
And life—it only seemed as this—
A lover's endless passion kiss.

SELF

I sing. A part of me
Joins not in song.
I move—the heart of me
Moves not along.

I speak—yet thoughts I know
Are never spoken.
I dream, but whence dreams go
I have not token.

Somewhere the soul of me
Lags far behind.
Somehow the whole of me
I cannot find.

LAST NIGHT

How still the night was! And I lay
So quietly, and tried to pray.

But all my thoughts just whirled and flew
Around Heaven, and back to you.

I held your letter in my hand,
And I tried hard to understand.

But when I read it once again
I knew not anything but pain.

The moonlight trembled on the floor,
Though I had bolted every door

And window—moonlight speaks of you,
It trembled—and I trembled too.

There comes an hour when we find
That all our life we have been blind.

There comes an instant when we feel
All other instants were unreal.

So in the stillness of the night
I learned this lesson, fought this fight,

And wept one last, long, time. The rest
Is silence—and silence is best.

JUBILATE

I am happy!
Notoriously!
Gloriously!
Uproariously!

To the tips of my toes
My blood a-tingle goes!
My limbs are white!
My soul is light!

Sing! Little birds your funny melodies!
Fling! Little winds your arms around the trees!
Pour! Brimming sun your wine into the sky!
You are not madder
Or gladder
Than I!

Into my drifting hair
I pin moon-flowers rare;
My cheeks are stained, you see,
With the red youth in me!

Dance! Little elves in the blue forest shade!
Kiss! Poor young lovers who sigh

For the love you will lose—the love you made—
You are not happy as I!

Happy am I!
Curiously!
Furiously!
Flauntingly!
Tauntingly!
Pass me not by!

A PRAYER

God, is it sinful if I feel
His arms about me when I kneel
To pray? His arms that thrilled and drew
Me along paths the world's youth knew?

Or is it sin if I mistake
Eternity for time—and break
One instant from the dust of years
To mix with ecstasy, and tears?

God, oh my God, the way is long
Alone. Can it be very wrong
To dream of ways I did not tread?
To weep for words I never said?

CHAPTERS

We who love life—we who love all
That is—shadow pierced and tall
Trees bent with a golden weight
Of sun; and flowers, dreaming late;
Ferns that lingeringly unfold
Green souls; and all the naked, cold
Clouds that wander across hills—
We who have heard, when silence fills
A night, the laughter of a star,
And who have trod where wonders are;
We who have touched an angel's wings,—
Who listen—if an angel sings. . . .

What matter if the hungry earth
And sea and air reclaim us? Mirth
Is ours and the sweet agony
Of love—that which was or can be—
We know, together. Let us stand
And read the instants, hand in hand,
Till they grow dim, till we divine
Not their full meaning—the last line
Holds yet, perhaps, some strange, clear truth—
Proves death another, fairer youth.

FRAGMENTS

I am a part of all things seen,
Of all that is; of all that's been;
I am part dust of world and sky,
And I am Thought that cannot die.

TO M. B. JR.

There is not wealth, nor the acclaim
Of multitudes—there is no fame
I would not forfeit to one end—
The “good! I like this!” of a friend.

THE BARRIER

If I look in another's eyes
It is your eyes I see.

If a hand touches mine I think
It is yours touches me.

All laughter bears the undertone
Of yours, all tears the pain,

All life the ecstasy you gave
Me once—and took again.

Is it not strange that I who tread
Youth's flowered, careless way,

Cannot forget the dreams we made,
The words we spoke, one day?

Must always your heart beat between
My heart and others? Will

The mem'ry of your kisses seal
My lips to others, still?

Life were too sweet, perhaps, could we
Make real the thoughts we know—

Death is not sad for those who weep.
God has ordained it so.

STARS

The night is like black crystal sprinkled with gold. I sit beside my mother on the high seat of the carriage and feel the night pressing against us—closer, closer, it presses—as though it would crush us between thick shadows.

My mother talks of many things but I do not try to understand. I hear only the silence of the night and I wonder why silence is loud.

Then my mother says “Look at the stars!” And I look up. It is the first time I behold them though I have seen them many times before.

Stars!
I have seen them and forgotten them. Now I see—and afterward I do not forget. Suddenly I love them. Oh! how I love them! They speak to me, and I answer softly, in a whisper—for we know only wonderful things.

FANTASY

Under the moon I lie
And sing.
Breezes die,
And the big stars swing
Like rosaries in a purple sky,
Like golden beads on a velvet ground.

I count them there....
To count is a prayer
That does not end, and that does not sound—
A prayer I found
Under the moon as I lay and sang
To the moon top, where the star-beads hang.

And my rosary, star on star,
Loops the universe round—so far
That I cannot see
Where its end may be.
But ever I pray
For I think, one day,
I shall break and toss
My body free
And kiss the cross
Of my rosary!
Wet is the moonlight,

And it is cold,
And it is white.
Fold on pale fold
It covers me deep
And I fall asleep. . . .

TO LIFE

Life! Wrap your arms about me
Tightly. . . .

For they are cruel and strong,
For they are brown and long,
And they can reach me.

Teach me
To love the pain
Of your embrace. Again,
Oh, teach me not to strain
From out it!

Life, you are like a man
Passionate and proud. I can
Not live and doubt it.

Take me, life! I would feel
Your great heart beat
And steal
All the wild heat
Of you, flaming to meet
And sear through
What is not real. . . .

Oh! I am sick of dreams!
Sick of a world that seems

Fed upon shadows. . . . Do
Take me, life, when you will,
And my pale being thrill
With the red strength of you!

WAITING

Foolish one,
I love you so!
Can it be
You do not know?

Timid one,
But come to me!
I am bound—
And you are free.

Where the shadows
On the grass
Stretch pale bodies—
There I pass. . . .

Where the sunlight
Runs in streams,
I have laid my
Little dreams.

In the darkness,
All alone,
I have heard the
Ages moan.

There is nothing
Love makes plain
That I have not
Learned again,

There is nothing
That I do
Done without a
Thought of you.

Foolish one!
And youth must go—
Can it be
You do not know . . . ?

MARRIAGE

Close, little door of my heart
Against the winds of the world!
To faces, voices, and tears
Close, like a flower furled
At dusk. Once, wide apart
Your portals flew
At Dawn. The heedless years
Entered. Then you,
Filled with dull pain,
Shut not again.

Close, little door of my heart!
Today there has entered in
Through the years
And the tears,
Through voices, and faces, sin,
Weariness,—one Face, one Voice—
And now—rejoice!
Close! And you prison there
In the dim chapel where
Strangers and fools paraded
And youth faded,
Him, for whose coming you swung

A-jar;
Him, for whose soul you flung
So far
The rusted key
Of mystery.

Close, little door! Never
Fear but your lock is strong—
Stronger than love is long!
Close . . . forever. . . .

THE PAST

It is best, perhaps, that we cease to care,
Having once cared finely, sweetly,
Best that, in parting, we meet despair
One instant, proudly, fleetly.

It is best that, loving, we did not spill
Out all our young passion madly,
That we turned our eyes aside, still
Pass one another sadly.

Yet what instants we might have known, each sense
In dizziest union thrilling!
What ecstasy, what recompense
Of love with more love filling!

Or what unimagined glories had seen,
Or dreams Paradise had disdained—
All this—all this that might have been—
Cannot ever be regained.

CRY OF A DEAD POET

See, stranger, my grave! Grasses sway
Over me, and your gleaming Day
Sinks not beneath the frost chilled ground
Where I have found
Relief.

I, too, have trod the worn way
Of grief—
I too have loved and suffered, and
Have agonized to understand. . . .

I, too, have smiled.
And now black, stiffened earth is piled
Over my thought.

Almost, I caught
The hem of a swift floating gown
Of light, sweeping
Beyond our life—
Almost had sung
Its wonder—when a dripping knife
Severed my frantic hands that clung—
And I was flung
Down, down. . . .
Weeping. . . .

THE LAST GOODNIGHT

Goodnight!

The day that was so full of sun—
The little day that was begun
So brilliantly, and just for me,
Is ending. Twilight, quietly,
Is creeping to its burnished rim
And worlds are dim. . . .

Goodnight!

A strange wind clasps the fading hills
And strangeness fills
The valleys. Naked now, and stark,
Out of the dark
Shadows are lifting,
And I am drifting
Upon them. . . .

Goodnight!

The last rays fall along
My life, and like a song
Too gently sung—Day goes;
Silence flows
Over me. . . .

TO A YOUNG POET

Let not the laughter of a world
Silence one song.
Raise up thy voice and sing!
Art liveth long.

Demand not praise. Nor praise nor
 blame
Can make thee less
Or greater. Bend thy heart
To Loveliness.

Feel, if thou can'st, the grandeur of
An unseen God.
Trace, if thou can'st, His touch
Beneath the sod.

Be quiet. A million secrets
Then shalt thou hear.
Walk humbly; and angels
Thou shalt come near.

Love. And yet wonder not if thou
Art not loved too,
For thou must suffer more
Than others do.

DEATH

Death lives in every flow'r
That grows.
Death flows
In every hour,
And blows
Around a woman's heart. . . .

In part
Death leaves
Its traces
In faces,

Is found
In the warm smell of ground
Fresh turned,
In the white smoke of burned,
Fragrant dreams;
In bright streams
Pouring out glory
Death weaves a story
Of sadness.

Life is but a farewell,
And life's gladness
A halting tale we tell

Upon the edge of Time,
A broken rhyme
We try to sing
And, failing, fling
Away. . . .

MEMORY

The thought of you is like a wound.
It comes when I am most happy.
And then my happiness bleeds,
And falls in thick drops out of my
 heart,
Until my body and my soul are white—
White with the stiff whiteness of dead
 things.

The thought of you is like a splash
 of stars
Against hot nights.
It is like song, whose lilt I cannot
 catch.
It is the coolness of a woman's hand,
Caressing.
It is a little glimpse of God
Through the gray shutters of
Life. . . .

THE ARTIST'S FEAR

Is it a waste of time to dip
My pen into rich sun
That lies in puddles all about
Since Morning was begun?

Is it a waste of time to spread
Bright colors on a page
That will be glued into a book
And shut, as in a cage?

Is it worth while to dream and hope,
To love and work and pray,
When like a book I shall be read
And closed, and put away?

TO C. E. K.

Last night I dreamed
I was a little girl once more,
And you—you seemed,
As in those days of yore—
A Presence lovely, yet remote,
Farthest when near,
Strange, but most dear—
Like a high note
Which, faintly heard, we strain
To hear again. . . .

And in my dream
There was a field of daisies, white
As drifted snow,
And a small stream
Pale bloodroot rimmed, where I
 would go
To gather buds for you. . . .
A summer's night
Washed in cold dew—
Stars, and the slow, infinite drone
Of locusts. In the dusk, alone,
I listened for your voice, a child
Whose world was Eden if you smiled.

And in my dream such tears
As only Youth can brew,
Bewilderments, vague longings, fears
And hopes because of you.

The dim road beckons; we will tread
Where you have trodden first, ahead—
So was it always, you would be
A little further on than we!

SOME DAYS

Some days my voice is mute, my heart
Quite empty, and I tread
All silently, with lagging steps,
The path that leads ahead.

Some days I cannot understand
The loveliness of rest,
But stumble onward, with hands clenched,
Upon an endless quest.

The birds still sing. I do not hear.
The stars crowd all the sky.
The beauty of the world puts out
Its arms—and I pass by.

Half blind, half deaf, aware—yet cold—
I pass, and human eyes
Look into mine and turn away
Sadly, in hurt surprise.

ON RETURNING A PIPE

Take back your pipe!
What need to tell
The story that you know full well?
Upon the mantelpiece it lay
In haughty pride, as though to say,
"Oh careless mortals, pause! behold!
He cherished me, yet I am cold—
He loved me, now his lips on mine
Draw fire from my heart
No more. I pine
For him and still my part
In all his life is small.

Pause, mortals, pause!
I symbol am
Of what you, too, will come to know.
Old friendships and familiar things,
Smiles, dreams, far hopes, all that life
 brings,
One day like me
Forgot will be,
And Time's long fingers, deft and tried,
Will lay *you* on the shelf aside!

CRITICS

Like bees that suck a flower's heart
And buzz importantly,
And sting who interrupts their meal—
So Critics seem to me.

Scarce has a wee bud opened wide
Its petals to the sun,
Than many bees assemble and
Invade it, one by one.

They crawl into its inmost soul,
Down where the seedlets are,
And drink its fragrance, smudge its
gown,
And leave a tiny scar.

The kindest bee is very rough—
May abuse his powers,
And, (sometimes without knowing it)
Wounds the sweetest flowers.

Men say that bees are useful, and
Make delicious honey,
And that "good" bees are always
worth
A vast sum of money.

But I have seen a baby rose
All pale and trembling, try
To hide her head as a bee flew
Inquisitively by.

THE ANSWER

“Do I love you?” This you ask,
Setting me the hardy task
Of all time, and rhyme, and youth,
As you whisper, “Tell the truth”. . .
So I ponder
While out yonder
The transparent moon swings low,
And a bird calls,
And a star falls,
But the answer—can I know?

Suns and planets, winds and flowers,
Nights and days and misty hours,
Clouds, a pearl, a butterfly—
Things eternal, things that die—
Are glad in being;
Strong, not seeing
Through the dimness. At each turn
I am doubting,
And am pouting,
And I am afraid to learn.

If to love you is to know
Where the twilight purples go,
And the glory

Of a story
Dreamed—if loving is to drink
Out of sadness,
Out of madness. . . .
Why, I love you then . . . I think. . . .

A SUICIDE'S PRAYER

Oh! Blue-white stream!
Listen! Could I but tear
My sad heart out, and there
Under your sweetness,
Under your fleetness
Hold it an instant,

Would it not then soon be
Of its dark stains washed free?
Would it not beat as wild
As the heart of a child?

But, Blue-white stream,
I cannot wrench it free
From the black depths of me. . . .
Come then! Dash over me!

Break, you, my flesh apart,
Find, you, this prisoned heart—
Touch it with your cool lips,
And on a wave that slips
Into Immensity
Whisper a memory. . . .

THE COQUETTE

Tonight before my mirror blue
I stand. Candles at either side
Flicker. A pinkish, orange hue
Sinks in the glass.

Oft I have tried
To know myself in that strange face
Confronting me between the lace
Of shadows. Yes! its true—its true!
I'm young—and I am passing fair!
Ringlets I have, of auburn hair,
Each light entangled curl inwrought
With finest gold, and my dark eyes
Are large and soft, my skin is white,
My lips made for a kiss—
(There's one who tries—
As others might—
To prove their worth, in this!)

See! not a wrinkle does begin
To squirm, wormlike, upon my skin!
Come nearer! nearer! stand by me—
Gaze in the mirror too, and see
How fair I am! Really, almost
I'd like to kiss myself—were not

The gloom so deep . . . so thick . . . a
ghost,
Almost, to my own eyes, I seem—
No! But a lovely, untold dream—
An angel's dream . . . by one forgot. . . .

How strange! As though the vision were
Not I! As though the unheard stir
Of formless things had wafted her
Between the dimness and the light
Into my mirror here—tonight!

I gaze and gaze . . . queerly she smiles
And watches me out of the haze,
Lays fingers on her lips, and piles
Of shadows lurch and fall and blow
More closely round her, like the flow
Of gray, innumerable years.
Now tell me, do you think it tears
That make her lovely eyes so bright? . . .
The woman in my glass . . . tonight? . . .

I thought I knew her! Oft before
We've played upon a distant shore,
Laughing together, hand in hand
Strayed down some little flowered slope
Of life . . . and now I grope . . . and
grobe. . . .

And touch her not, nor understand
How she can smile, how she can weep. . . .
The shadows are thick, shadows creep
Over and under—everywhere—

Along the smoothness of her throat,
Into the glory of her hair
And eyes, and ever more remote
Her gestures. Tell me—is it shame—
Or is it but the candle flame—
Floods those lovely cheeks with fire?
Do you think it is desire? . . .
I had believed she could not bow
That proud young head . . . and now . . .
and now. . . .
We're strangers—but I know not why—
The woman in the glass, and I!

THE DREAMER

I am as one who only stands
And carves a name upon the sands—
A wanderer—lost to the world—
Upon a misty island hurled.

I am a ship-wrecked dreamer there
In a sad Paradise more fair
Than dreams, where but a dream is left
To love, since of a God bereft.

On sands of life my dreams I lay,
But Time, the ocean, floods Today—
Tomorrow's beach is polished clean
By waves that creep where I have been.

TO J. P. K.

Words . . . words . . . how can words
always flow

When this—and only this I know—
That you are dead? There, in some
room,

There, in the empty gloom
Are laid! God, have you made
The glory of our little day
To sweep it utterly away?

(I falter, and my faith is weak.
Eternal One! Lean down and speak
To me! I'm blind. . . . I cannot see
Your face, or find in mystery,
Your answer. . . . I beseech you, speak!
Eternal One! I am so weak. . . .)

Dearest, your life with mine was
bound,
Through childhood and through youth
I found
Your eyes upon me, and your hand
In mine, and did not understand.

Now you are dead. Dead. Dead.
And the last prayer is said. . . .

Words . . . oh, I cannot write
Calmly, is not the Night
Between us? What is rhyme
Crushed in the fist of Time?

A VIOLINIST

You played. And then I closed my
eyes
And listened. Time
Drifted away. The pale, young skies
Bent to that lifted sacrament
Of sound. I found
Your soul in one white, naked note
That, laughing, fell
From Paradise
In which you dwell.

POETS

Poets, they tell me, do not care
To live in cities—
A thousand pities!
Because it must be true that there
Are poets everywhere—
Even in cities. . . .

If poets yearn
For sun washed fields
And Autumn woods aglow,
If but the moods that Nature yields
A poet longs to know—
If he would watch a baby fern
(And seek therein delight)
Open its baby fist and turn
Itself toward the light. . . .
If poets cannot happy be,
And poets cannot Beauty see
Or wonder find
In great cities—
Poets are blind
Weavers of ditties.

For see! In every dingy town
Sometimes the rain comes drifting
down—

A million strands of silver thread
Unwound, and overhead
The round clouds, swinging gently,
 flow
Between the house-tops, very low,
And golden lamp-lights spill and sway
Like dahlias on the street;
Somewhere between the mist, Today
Mingles with Night. Their breath
 is sweet.

In cities, too, at twilight time
A star floats very high
Above the canyons red and gray
Where little people work and play
And laugh and weep and die. . . .
And if you choose with me to climb
Upon the faerie crest
Of some gigantic palace, there,
(A white wave held at rest)
Then hand in hand we'll stand above
The foolish things we used to love,
And watch the sun burst red and go
Into the dimness far below.

The city hums a sleepy song
And cuddles down between the long
Thick folds of greenish fog that creep
Upon it and are soft and deep. . . .
And all the world melts into blue—
And space and life—and I and you—
And silence brims into our thought.

We are but atoms, strangely caught
In time, who ride
An instant side by side,
And in an instant fall
Back, into All.

Oh! Cannot poets ever see
The poems in Eternity?

And in great cities there are days
Filled with a dusty sparkle-haze
When every brick and every stone—
Even the piles of rubbish thrown
Aside, are painted glory tints
You cannot buy with all the mints
Of ages. Look!
White doorsteps glimmer smooth and
 clean,
And on the pavements is a sheen
Of varnish. Every edge and crook
Of everything is dipped in bright
Clear bubbling light,
And, in every city Square,
Children laugh forever there....

Go, Poets! Seek your woodlands,
 then!
Forget this weary world of men!
We are not poets—we remain
To find its beauty in its pain.

MY JEWELS

I have seen the swelling sun,
Like a blood filled bubble, fall
To the sharpened world, and burst on
 the tip
Of a Pine tree that is tall.

I have seen a clear, glass cloud,
Painted with pink and with gray,
Float to the top of the tilted gold cup
Of the dawn, and spill away.

I have heard a Woodpecker
Beating the heart of a tree,
And I have kissed naked young leaves that
 stretched
Cold washed faces up to me.

HOURS

Here on the hill I fling myself
Deep in the sun-tipped grass.
I am an elf!
Green clad and glad!
Stung with a mad
Young love—and here I pass
Round, shining hours
While silent flow'rs
Bend their gentle faces
Above, out of places
Hidden from men—

Gold sprinkled corridors,
Tiny, endless, that lead
Through tufted shafts the laughing
seed
Of things that grow. . . .

And here I know
The secrets that your books can't tell—
Swift magic, and a twilight bell
Rocking from out a distant town
Tumbles the giddy sunset down
Upon my head;
And on this bed

Of swift, drifting, tingling glory
I strain, I catch at the story
I have not heard
Told word on word.

If the pale grass trembles,
I tremble too.
Night wanders, and the dew
Falls from her eyes
Upon my cheek.
Her fingers slip through mine and
 speak
Far things you would not understand—
Far, broken things—and now my hand
Is touched by One beyond our Time,
And kissed by Lips beyond a
 rhyme. . . .

WHEN I AM DEAD

The fires that toss through my clear
blood—

Soon these will cool to ashes;
And all my love of love—this flood
Of reaching life, that flashes
Through me into the universe—
This shall be hid by Time, the nurse,
Who pulls a sheet across the face
Of tortured Youth; and every trace
Of me upon the earth I tread
Shall be but earth—when I am dead.

POEMS

I am tired of poems of love, the moon,
Of stars and of passion and death—
I am sick of odes upon Nature and Hope
And Spring and its “balmy breath.”

Must always the lines that poets contrive
Be twisted the same foolish way?
Have none of our poets who babble so much
Got anything new to say?

And yet, what is new? The world is so old!
The universe never began!
Sing, then! Little Shadows before you must
fade!
Sing! Little Phantoms called Man!

The moon does not care if you think it fair—
A rose is no redder for you,
And the sky does not hear your praises, I
fear,
When it is a turquoise blue!

Sing! Little Phantoms! Forget, in your
songs,
If you can—you live but Today—

Forget that your stars and your moons and
your Springs
Heed not at all what you say!

For your moons and stars and Summers and
Springs
Move on with the long step of Time,
And smile with a cruel and pitying smile
Through Eternity at rhyme!

Oh! Gather your queer little words and string
Them out from the point of your pen,
And study your metre, and torture your brain,
And give to the Phantoms—Men—

Wise little stupid melodious thoughts,
And the Phantoms will shout your name—
But your moon and stars, and your Summer
and Spring
Will never hear of your fame.

Ages shall fall like a seamless white pall
And bury your words in a pile—
But the moon and the stars and Summer and
Spring
Smile an inscrutable smile.

THE WOODNYMPH

Out in the forest all alone
A woodnymph sits upon a stone
Of amber, and she combs her hair
And smiles—because she is so fair.

An oval pool is at her feet,
Twined with white moss and flowers sweet,
And all day long upon the stone
The woodnymph sits, and dreams alone

The big trees love her, shut her out
From eyes of men, and all about
Stretch bearded, gentle faces down
And touch her, and pretend to frown.

The shadows yearn—but never dare
To twist themselves into her hair,
And all day long she combs it through
And laughs—what *can* a lover do?

He can slay all the selfish trees!
He can find her and he can seize
Her little hands—so small—so white—
That fold his dreams into the night!

Woodnymph! Combing your sun-drenched
hair!

Laughing and sighing—dreaming there
In the dim forest all alone
Upon a polished amber stone—

Do you believe I cannot break
That little comb of yours and take
You from the sobbing forest and
Kiss you until you understand?

LAUGHTER

“Beauty is sadness” . . . once I smiled
When men spoke thus. I was a child
Of laughter then—and laughter mad—
I smiled, if men called beauty sad.

And all my merry, wise youth through
I laughed and laughed—till I met you. . . .
And then I stopped; then laughter seemed
A sort of noise that I had dreamed.

But this is strange . . . I'd rather be
Possessed of just one memory
Of you—than to forget love's pain
And have my laughter back again!

WEDDING OF NATURE AND A SOUL

It is my wedding day! The dawn
Laughs out across the hills.
The sleepy Pine trees wake, and yawn
And stretch, and wonder fills
My cup of life to its gold brim. . . .
I wait—I wait alone—for him!

Long we have loved. When but a child
I felt strange lips on mine—
Now swiftly opened, beating wild
Wings touch me, a divine
Tremor shakes all the world—a sigh
Of dreams that only yearn to fly.

And so I wait. Blinded joy feels
Its way through thought. I wait.
A stupid, rosy Cupid steals
My veil—shoots arrows late.
Young flowers titter; then I see
Them weeping dewy tears for me.

Will he forget? But hush . . . oh
hush . . .

He comes! The forest bends
To meet him, and the pale clouds blush—
He comes! Now he descends

Upon me . . . oh! His arms are strong!
Oh! I have loved him—loved him long!

Sing, forest! Every tiny leaf
Burst out your veins with song!
Cling, flowers, to us! All belief
In Beauty's to belong
To Beauty, and to hold it fast
An instant, ere it flashes past.

SEA-GULLS

Against the evening sky
Hosts of great Sea-gulls fly
In slanting bars.
Is it not strange that they
Should know a trackless way
Among the stars?

ECSTASY

To the smooth, cool, sun-washed dome
Of a hill I crept.
The forest slept.
I was far from home.

Far, far from home!
White grasses fell
In waves against me. I could tell
Where Pines pricked open Paradise.
In me burst a mad surprise.

I stood and flung my arms out wide.
Youth was in me! Could I hide
Its glory? And the trees stooped wet
And bare; oh! could I forget
That I was young?

Clouds were lilies. Down they swung
In loose garlands from the skies.
Perfume stung my heart. My eyes
Were blind with light—then I trod,
Laughing sadly, up to God.

A PORTRAIT

Your eyes are strange. I do not know
Their color, nor their meaning, though
I've searched them secretly to find
The secret thing that is your mind.
Woman with the cold red lips
And pale, strong hands! Your spirit dips
Far into mine and drinks—but I
Tremble when I pass you by.

Ah, may I never touch that hand?
Or kiss those eyes? . . . or understand?
I love you! But you only smile
Sadly, and for a little while. . . .

FLOWERS

The Master Painter mixes
His colors far on high,
And sweeps them soft at evening
Across the empty sky.
Faint blue and gold and carmine,
Purple, silver, and green,
Mingle and throb in sunsets,
Shimmer and fade and gleam.
Tints on that mighty easel
Fade in the distant hush,
Only flowers are left us—
The drippings from his brush. . . .

PLATITUDES

“Creatures of Time!”
The hackneyed phrase
Sings over dully in my brain
Through sunlit days. . . .
And joy . . . and pain. . . .

“Creatures of Time!”
What more? And yet
We strut long futile hours
 through
Laughing, forget
What once we knew.

The endless tide
Sweeps on, and we,
Sinking, stretch out our hands to
 grasp,
And smile to see
Bright things flit past.

TO THE MUSE

God of the Tints and Tones
No Art can teach!
Power above the thrones
I may not reach!
Glance down out of Infinity
And pity me . . . and pity
me. . . .

Only a twisted note is flung
To earth as your vast song is sung,
Only a bubble drifts to me
Out of your spangled symphony.

SUPPLICATION

Thou whom we name flippantly. . . . God. . . .
Oh vast uncreated!
To whom we mouth our greedy lips
In countless words freighted
With futile wants—Who alone grips
The stars between strong fingers, hears
All silently our little fears. . . .

Thou, who hast woven Ages, and
Whose blood as energy
Nourishes worlds—Thought Unsleping,
Unsolved, Eternity
Itself—Behold! We are weeping,
Wanting Thee—time wound tops that dance
Awhile, and break on Circumstance.

Art thou sad, oh Being Eternal?
Art thou sad?
Or is our weeping naught to Thee?
Are we mad?
Dost Thou laugh, Being Eternal? See
Our individual life released
At death—in other forms increased?

What we called “soul” in us poured down
As sunlight on a star?

What we called "flesh" crushed into dust
And all we were and are
Made something else? Creator, must
Our little hopes but fall apart
As fall the pulsings of our heart?

I do not know—when shall I know?
And yet I do believe
That Thou who called me into being,
Canst not myself deceive
Forever into feeling, seeing
Thyself in everything, if Thou
Art to me nothing then, or now.

Why make me, Lord, to seek Thee if
The search is but a jest?
Why tempt me, Lord, to find Thee if
To lose Thee were my rest?
Why does my spirit, like a skiff
Shattered against a rocky shore
Still love the Sea that floods it o'er?

Thou are not cruel . . . Thou are not cruel. . . .
In this I place my trust,
And, trusting, lift my eyes to Thee
Because I must. . . . I must. . . .
Grant then, Creator, that I see
Thyself at last, or do now close
My eyes from seeing, like a rose

That lives, indeed, and living, sheds
Its beauty—just a flow'r

That yearns not passion, yearns not love,
Feels not, is but an hour
Becoming, hopes not things above
Itself—is happy for it knows
Always, only, it is a rose.

SNOW

Over the city washed with gray
The snow-flakes sway. . . .
Sway, and mingle, and gently fall
And touch the dirty street, where all

Noise is hushed. The loose clouds
 flow
Against the world. Sparks of snow
Drift, like petals through the skies,
From a rose in Paradise.

My life is like a snow-flake. I
Float an instant on the sigh
Of ages, swelled with light—and free—
Strangers soon will trample me.

TO A FRIEND

Sometimes your spirit touches mine
But you, I think, do not divine
The instant when the two entwine. . . .

I am a brook.
You are the sea.
Am I to you what
You are to me?

My shallows turn to depth in you,
My colors burn a clearer hue,
And blackness, rippling in my heart,
Gathers to waves that burst apart
In majesty
When you touch me.

You are the sun.
I—a flow'r
Daring to love you
For an hour. . . .

Can a sun know that its vast light
Fondles a petal till the tight
Closed bud unfolds,
And fragrance holds?

CONFESSION

The world's a dream to me, I know
Whate'er I do, where'er I go,
If plunged in vast affairs of state
Nor let my actions time abate,
Though every instant pregnant be
With deeds of sound reality,
Yet all life and all actions seem
The floating rainbow of a dream,
A colored, sun-shot drift of spray
Waft of an ocean depths away,
A star-spun web of Beauty not
Vanished a moment till forgot.

And yet each instant, though unreal,
Vibrates with wonder, and I feel
The inner, mystic Mind that wills,
And with hot force each atom thrills.

We hate and clash, we little men,
Make peace—then hate and clash again—
And build a garden or a town
To, when its finished, tear it down.
Like puppets are we wound and set
To rush about, and fume and fret
And grasp, and in a tumble vie

With one another till we die?
And then like insects too profuse
Earth mingled be, and find our use
In richening the clay? The gain?
A flower brighter for our pain!

Volumes I've read, and pondered slow,
More than the common man to know;
Yet all of knowledge comes to this—
We are, and while we are, seek bliss.
There is a something in our soul,
Urging the part to find the whole—
Life argues God. We strain to see,
And finite yearns Infinity.

Music, the written word, all Art's
Symbolic of the groping heart
Of man which, in its highest reach,
Teaches in that it fails to teach.
The beauty of our life is such
We only soil it when we touch
Its form with analytic skill—
Science, life mocks, and lures us still
To marvel and applaud, adore
Its Maker and attempt no more.

Not that we should but blindly stare
The Universe, quite unaware,
Or take for granted all we see
Not questioning how it may be,
But that, in seeking, we refrain
To set the key at lower plane.

Because creation's pitch is high
For us to sing, must we then try
To warp the octave, scales to change,
And thus its harmony derange?

Is it not wonderful to be—
To think and feel, to do and see—
And yet, in being, know that all

Oneself and every thought is small?
Set like a pin point t'wixt two seas
Of ignorance, we strain and seize
At straws of knowledge—theories dim—
And, with this aid, essay to swim
Toward an unchartered goal. We pride
Ourselves on Reason and decide
Naught is, that Reason cannot mark;
Of life, has Reason found the spark?

Belief in God but once denied
This Reason wavers, and is dyed
In bogs of speculation thick
With Contradictions. There we stick
And, sinking, do not extricate
Ourselves until it is too late.

Think, fool! Look up! If we could see
All that that Is then would we be
Not man, but God—and have no need
Of Wonderment, of Faith or Creed—
Or Past or Future. But since you
Created are, then it is true

In your weak state you cannot hope
Doors of all mysteries to ope
And through Creation's Portals gape.

Oh men! who claim that from an ape
You sprang, yet, still assured, intend
To sway the Planets—God transcend
And put away! Were your vaunts not
So pitiful much mirth, I wot,
They'd brew in Heaven—but, scarce spoke,
The speaker dies. His brain is broke
In bits by worms and he is done.
(Still all the universe can run.)

Ages repeat, our Reason used
Aright, is never sense abused—
Endow dead earth with heart and mind—
Say: "herb, beast, man, are of one Kind
And from the one the other drew
Out life," is but to trace anew
God's work. A thousand epochs can
Not in mere time account for man
Design left out. Seek not to tell
Us chance has ruled all things thus well
And order keeps. Star beyond star
Moves in its ordained groove. Afar,
Unnumbered worlds revolving see
Controlled. Their awful majesty
Veilēd in distance, lest we feel,
Sickened with dread, that God is real.
Above the universe He waits
Eternally; loves; recreates.

Meanwhile we live, or think we do—
A cramped existence. It is true
We know not much—but be content
Our souls are up—not downward—bent;
Part of the circle now we scan—
All of it soon—the perfect Plan
At last we'll see, and until then
Mark how the patterns fit! My pen
Is guided by a Hand unseen
Till it must move, and all I mean
To say is spoken by a Voice
Through me. And I have little choice
Of words, but still must write—nor try
To pause. So write, scarce knowing why
Or what. This Power urging me
Is the same conscious Energy
Moving vast worlds—and men speak wrong
Who say the Poet makes his song.

A CHILD

I am very small and important, and I demand to be loved. Always, I want you to love me—but there is something sad in you, something far away.

I like to kiss you, and if you do not kiss me in return, I weep . . . but you never know. For I weep at night in bed, where I lie with my rag doll clenched in my arms and am alone.

Then it seems to me that the world is lonely because you are not with me, and because I have kissed you, but you have not cared.

I listen to the locusts humming . . . humming . . . in the garden, and I wonder. . . . Why do you not love me? I am very small, and I am so important, and it is so necessary that I be loved!

Oh, if you understood!

One morning I rush to you, laughing. I am happy, and it seems to me that you must be happy too. I fling my arms about you and wait. But you look at me strangely—and forget to smile. . . .

A WORD

There is a word I hate—
And you have used it,
Mocking my trust in Fate—
Others excused it.

What is this little word
That I abhor—
This that I have not heard
You speak before?

Ah, but you know it well!
And you are clever!
The meaning is “farewell”—
The word is—“never.”

ALONE

Voices and faces, laughter, tears—
And great halls filled with Youth,
And little twisted roads where years
Slip past the thing called Truth. . . .

Through these I walk, and hardly know
For what I seek, yet fling
My arms out wide to catch the sun—
And touch not anything.

Flesh is but Shadow wrapped in cloth,
And Soul I cannot see,
And all the turmoil of the earth
Is like a dream to me.

Why do ye laugh, who are so gay?
Why weep, who are so sad?
The children of our little day
Are beautiful—and mad.

So I must pass (I know not if
It is your fault or mine)
Unloved, alone, I must pass on
To where all paths entwine. . . .

And God will take us in His arms—
The sinners and the good—
And smile away the tears of those
Who have misunderstood.

A WALK

In the taut silence of the wood
Where Angels tread,
Fingers on lips,
And overhead
Brown clouds are twisted round the tips
Of trees that brush
Warm dreams against the sky, and hush
Time with long whispers, as it slips
Under the stillness—there we stood;

And you—you talked of foolish things,
And laughed out loud—
The pale, star-dripping veil that swings
Back from the proud
Black head of Night, fluttered, and swept
Over my heart. . . . I could have wept,
Then, because you did never feel
The kiss of groping thoughts that steal
Out of the world—nor breath of wings
Passing . . . but talked—of foolish things. . . .

A GARDEN

My garden's quaint,
And it is bright
With golden light
And rainbow paint.

A tiny pond
Is set in grass. . . .
A looking-glass
For all beyond.

Great pigeons sway
On snowy wings.
The fountain sings;
The wind blows gay.

The shadows sift,
And butterflies
In thousands rise—
Petals adrift.

WHILE YOU TALK

Sometimes, when you have been talking
Of houses, and people, and things,
A mad, up-leaping fire flings
Me far—I hear not what you say
For I am swept into a Day
That is, was, and shall ever be—
A day of that Eternity
You can forget.

And when you fret
Because I do not comprehend
The sentences that never end—
The sentences about your Things—
Then bear with me, for Beauty clings
Around my heart, and what you feel
Is life, to me is then less real
Than shadows that a curved moon throws
Upon the world, or hope that goes
Dancing across pale dreams to sleep—
Or thoughts only the Angels keep.

A WOMAN

You would give your red lips to press
On mine forever—would caress
Me with your white, unused arms
And fill me with the sweet alarms
Love sends through Man;

And you would nail your heart to mine,
And with your laughter would entwine
My soul and body, till the two
Were one—and always one—for you.
This is your plan.

MY WILL

Oh Death! Great and unrealized goal
Of all who live! Only a dream
Your vast, unclosing portals seem,—
A vague half truth—
To me whose soul
Is drunk with Youth. . . .

Strange Death! What are you now to me
Who quaffs the glittered ecstasy
Of being? who treads a path of light
Leading away into the night
I do not fear? . . . but that is near. . . .

Violet shadows on a wall,
And drifting clouds, an owl's far call—
A flower wet with starry dew—
These are more real, oh Death, than you!

And still you come. Your pauseless tread
Dimly I hear. I shall be dead. . . .
And who loved, and who loves me yet
Will weep a moment, then forget—
And all my smiles, and all my tears,
Will fade into the drifted years.

But this I ask. Who e'er you be
That watches my last agony,
And shuts my eyes in that long sleep
The unnamed, ageless millions keep,

Pull not a sheet across my face,
Nor draw the blinds and dim the place
And speak in whispers. This I hate,
With feigned affection, coming late,
And windy sighs, and solemn airs,
And cast down eyes in unfelt prayers.

Open the windows! Do not chide
The boys who shout in play outside—
Nor what is joyous, what is bright;
For these I loved. I loved the Light.

THE END

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